

South Dakota National Guard

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SD Guard's 109th Regional Support Group changes command

RAPID CITY, S.D. – U.S. Army Col. Michael Oster, of Rapid City, took command of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 109th Regional Support Group during a change of command ceremony, July 10, at Duke Corning Armory on Camp Rapid.

Oster assumed responsibility from Col. Marshall Michels, of Rapid City, who served in the position since September 2013.

"I am really honored to be given this opportunity," said Oster. "It is a tremendous privilege and brings with it a tremendous amount of responsibility. The history of the 109th is long and incredibly decorated and I am following a long list of incredibly successful leaders and members of that organization."

The 109th RSG is one of four major commands for the SDARNG. As the commander, Oster is responsible for the command and control of about 18 units totaling more than 900 Soldiers in nine communities throughout South Dakota. The 109th assists assigned units in meeting training, administrative and logistical requirements to maintain the unit's readiness in support of state and federal missions.

"Any time an officer is given the privilege to command it is a highlight of their career," said Oster. "The opportunity to work with Soldiers is why we serve. They make it all happen. To serve as their commander is a role I take on knowing I better bring my best each day – because that's what they will bring – and that is certainly what they will expect from me."

Oster also works fulltime for the SDARNG as the deputy chief of staff for strategic planning at Camp Rapid. Col. Michels transfers to the Joint Force Headquarters on Camp Rapid where he will continue to serve as the SDARNG chief of staff.

"Serving at the 109th commander has been the best three years of my military service," said Michels. "Having the opportunity to command the dedicated professionals of the 109th is the highlight of my career."

"The 109th is fortunate to have a new commander that will build on previous success and make the 109th an even better organization," continued Michels. "Col. Oster is the type of leader that inspires success and establishes excellence as the standard."

Oster began his military service in 1986 enlisting as a combat wire installer with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery in Mitchell. He received his commission through the Officer Candidate School program in 1990. He earned his Bachelors and Master of Science degrees from South Dakota State University and recently graduated from the United States Army War College.

Oster has commanded the 665th Maintenance Company, 727th Transportation Company, Recruiting and Retention Battalion and the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. He has completed two tours of duty: one to Iraq in 2004-2005 with the Rapid Fielding Initiative, and his second tour to Afghanistan with the 152nd CSSB in 2013.

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“I have had the good fortune to have been trained and mentored by some of the best officers and enlisted Soldiers that the Army has to offer,” said Oster. “I look forward to ensuring the 109th RSG and all of its units continue to be the best that the U.S. Army has to offer and to ensure we are always ready to accept any challenge and complete any mission whenever called.”

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



U.S. Army Col. Michael Oster: (U.S. Army National Guard file photo)



160710-Z-ZZ999-111: U.S. Army Col. Michael Oster, right, incoming commander for the 109th Regional Support Group, South Dakota Army National Guard, receives the unit colors from Brig. Gen. Kevin Griese, assistant adjutant general of the SDARNG, during a change of command ceremony at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., July 10, 2016. Oster assumed command of the 109th from Col. Marshall Michels, who held the position since September 2013. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Rachel Korzeniewski)



160710-Z-WF991-089: U.S. Army Col. Michael Oster, left, incoming commander for the 109th Regional Support Group, South Dakota Army National Guard, receives the unit colors from Brig. Gen. Kevin Griese, assistant adjutant general of the SDARNG, during a change of command ceremony at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., July 10, 2016. The passing of the colors symbolizes the new commander's assumption of control of the 109th RSG. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)



160710-Z-ZZ999-133: U.S. Army Col. Michael Oster takes command of the 109th Regional Support Group during the change of command ceremony at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., July 10, 2016. Oster assumed command of the 109th from Col. Marshall Michels, who held the position since September 2013. (U.S. Army National Guard photo taken by Sgt. Rachel Korzeniewski)



160710-Z-ZZ999-163: U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Couser, center, and Lt. Col. Tim Schlotterback, left, members of the 109th Regional Support Group, South Dakota Army National Guard, present outgoing commander, Col. Marshall Michels, with a parting gift from the unit during a change of command ceremony at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., July 10, 2016. Michels relinquished command to Col. Michael Oster, after serving in the position since September 2013. (U.S. Army National Guard photo taken by Sgt. Rachel Korzeniewski)

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